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ABSTRACT

This descriptive report examines the efforts of a faculty team at the University of Minnesota's General College to revise an interdisciplinary general education course on conflict and change so that it would meet the unique educational needs of adult, non-traditional students. The report first describes a proposed course delivery format designed to accommodate the schedules of adult working students. This two-quarter format includes early morning hours of instruction on educational television, one late afternoon/early evening session of two and one-half hours each week on campus, and six day-long Saturday workshops. The report then examines the main focus of the course, i.e., the idea of conflict as a catalyst for growth and productivity, and describes the use of metaphor recognition and inductive learning in helping non-traditional students assimilate course material. Factors to be considered in enhancing faculty rapport with non-traditional students are then examined, followed by a discussion of the need to create course objectives which stress the improvement of student self-esteem rather than traditional cognitive skill development. The report concludes with an outline of tentative course evaluation plans, including evaluations of student learning and self-esteem improvement and of faculty performance and course materials. (JP)

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CONFLICT AND CHANGE:
AN EXPERIMENTAL COURSE STARTING OVER.

GAIL KOCH

10 July 1980

PAPER PRESENTED AS PART OF A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT THE AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION/SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP FOR TWO YEAR COLLEGE RESEARCH CONFERENCE (COLUMBUS, OH, JULY 10, 1980)

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Conflict and Change:

An Experimental Course Starting Over

Conflict and Change is a team-taught integrated course of study for nontraditional students in general education at the baccalaureate level. Among the experimental undertakings now in progress at the University of Minnesota's General College, this course is something of a middle-aged youngster. Its story here concerns planning for its revision midway in its passage through the College's traditional initiating cycle of three experimental offerings.

Two factors prompted interest in early renovation. The external impetus was the dramatic change in format envisioned shortly after the first experimental offering of the course had been completed. At that time about a year ago, this course and others like it in the General College were recommended as major components of individually designed baccalaureate programs for a new group of students looking towards transfer to the University of Minnesota from Minneapolis Community College. These students are currently pursuing junior-college degrees at the latter institution under the auspices of the College for Working Adults. This system of college study, resembling the Weekend College experiment at Wayne State University in Detroit, enables people who are employed full time to complete a two-year degree program in about the regular period of time. Agreeing to participate in the College for Working Adults program at the baccalaureate level, the General College committed itself to a major experiment in streamlining its mode of upper-division course delivery.

The second impetus to change resulted from recognition of unresolved difficulties in the course's operation by the end of its second experimental offering. Throughout testimonies by students and staff to the challenging and stimulating effectiveness of the course ran vaguely articulated misgivings. The broad scope of the course, the voluminous content, the smart turnover pace and staccato attack of topics, the scarcity of clear and regular clues about what or how to study have been cited as troublesome. Seeming to underlie all of these concerns have been reservations about how gracefully and profoundly the course meets its aim to be an integrated educational experience for nontraditional students. Rethinking the course in order to address this purpose more systematically in both the planning and execution stages and reduce its vulnerability to the exigencies of varying team-teaching styles has been a major consideration in the recently inaugurated planning sessions for the new version of the course now scheduled for first experimental offering in the winter and spring quarters of 1981.

In developing the working principles for revision, the three members of the current faculty team not only are relying upon the experience of the course as it was conducted in its first experimental stage but also are making concerted efforts to cast their approach to the course in accord with their combined working knowledge and perceptions of nontraditional students. By so doing, they affirm the customary guiding proposition of experimental curricular development in the General College: the presence of nontraditional students in the University community makes a compelling difference in how courses and programs are conceived and implemented; their interests and concerns, their academic capabilities and educational needs are the essential points of reference in designing and redesigning unconventional courses of study. A truism characterizing the aims of countless experimental ventures

in general education over the past half century in American undergraduate institutions, this principle nonetheless is a stubborn one, yielding neither to ready realization nor to easy dismissal. The following summary of the main considerations for revising Conflict and Change demonstrates one of the General College's most recent attempts to continue proceeding from this challenging starting point in refining its 48-year-old experimental educational enterprise.

Redesigned Delivery Format

Conflict and Change is the second of three courses created as part of the General College's efforts to develop a full and varied selection of upper-division courses for students enrolled in its two baccalaureate degree programs and to enrich their final years of collegiate work with institutionally integrated courses of study. Planned and taught by a faculty team representing each of the three academic fields of knowledge, these multidisciplinary multimedia courses have their antecedent in lower-division team-taught coordinated studies ("package" courses) developed in the College during the 1960s and 1970s. The three together—Towards a Good Life, Conflict and Change, Energy and Risk—will constitute the first round of offerings next year to students enrolled in General College baccalaureate degree programs under the College for Working Adults plan.

Enrollment in these upper-division programs has customarily been mixed—students regularly enrolled in General College day-school on-campus courses and students enrolled in courses offered night and day, on and off campus, through Continuing Education and Extension. A variety of delivery formats has been tried to meet the scheduling requirements of these different groups separately and conjointly. The projected addition of College for Working

Adults students to the pool of nontraditional students seeking a place in the upper-division integrated courses has led planners to devise a delivery format that takes advantage of nearly all the earlier trial schemes and adds one.

These special students are people whose full-time work and otherwise teeming lives preclude their seeking college degrees. They will not consider interrupting their careers for a three- or four-year stint in college, and they have been unable, by available conventional means, to put together cohesive degree programs that can be completed in a reasonable number of years. Substantial integrated courses which constitute the full quota of general education degree requirements and, in some cases, the major part of their core course work would solve part of their problem. For this purpose, Conflict and Change will be converted from a 13-credit, one-quarter course to an 18-credit, two-quarter course sequence. The other integrated upper-division courses are adopting this formula also. The second problem has been class meeting times and places. College for Working Adults students need both concentrated abbreviated periods of conventional classroom instruction and regular course scheduling on a scheme compatible with their work schedules. To meet these requirements, all three integrated courses will follow the same delivery plan: two-and-a-half early-morning hours of instruction each week (one-half hour a day) over KTCA, the local public education television station; one late-afternoon/early-evening session of two-and-a-half hours each week on campus; three day-long (seven-hour) Saturday workshop/conference sessions each quarter on campus.

For the new faculty teams, the challenges lie, of course, in contriving effective educational use of the short segments of television time and the long blocks of workshop/conference time on Saturdays and in integrating the

work of the three instructional settings. The television time is an entirely new feature in these courses; plans for its use in Conflict and Change are amorphous at this time. But the seven-hour Saturday sessions were tried in this course during the past year. What was learned is that aiming for enlivening variety by simply shifting activities (films, guest lectures, student presentations, simulation games, and so on) in the conventional whole-group classroom setting is workable but enervating and educationally dubious. The planning team for next year is following the advice of last year's team in considering the conference method of multiple concurrent small-group sessions; whole-class and multiple small task-group field trips, full-length feature films, and live artistic performances are also being considered.

Evaluation of this aspect of the course will be concerned, of course, with the efficacy of the delivery format for College for Working Adults students; comparison of their experience here with their experience under a similar format in their two-year programs at Minneapolis Community College is a likely prospect. But just as significant will be consideration of the appeal and usefulness of this format to other General College and Continuing Education and Extension students enrolled in the course, most of whom also characteristically lead full and complicated adult lives outside the academy. In addition, where both groups of students are concerned, careful evaluative consideration will be given to the practice of devoting one-third of the instructional time to televised delivery. Remote instruction—televised and programmed instruction in particular—has been tried for nontraditional students in the General College with something less than glowing success. The hypothesis is that nontraditional students are more secure and productively motivated when they have immediate face-to-face contact with instructional staff. Testing this proposition under the new delivery scheme

in Conflict and Change and its companion courses will be one of the research objectives of their experimental offering over the next three years.

Refocused Course Subject

In choosing "conflict" as the subject of study, the original framers of the course hit upon a salient feature and concern of nontraditional students' lives. Their complicated, multifarious living and family arrangements exhibit numerous conditions and means of maintenance and disruption; their tentative and permanent working careers are full and demanding and in perpetual competition with other areas of their lives, not the least of which is school; their formal school experiences are fraught with spectacular "hard-knocks" successes and haunting misfit obstructions; they are engaged in a remarkable variety of social service and legal entanglements. . . . Conflict is the essence of these students' lives. And owing to the diversity of the students served by the course, this human condition is represented in their contributions to the class in unusual variety: crises of post-adolescence through retirement, of inter- and intra-racial relationships, of welfare-recipient and country-club social sets, of straight and nonconformist behavior in many forms, and so on.

The appropriateness of conflict as a subject of study for these students has been testified to by their performance in the first two experimental offerings: they have treated the endeavor with a high degree of curiosity and genuine conscientiousness, exhibiting none of the pretended interest, perfunctory address to work, outright annoyance, and other characteristic symptoms which attend their exposure to studies that are merely faddish or that utterly miss the mark of what interests and concerns them. In the new version of the course, the commitment to this subject of study will remain

intact, and the general aim of the course will be reaffirmed. It is this: to provide nontraditional students with the opportunity and means to complicate and enrich their apprehension of the human conflicts which impinge upon their personal and collective lives.

Experience, however, has suggested renaming the course, thus redirecting the focus most apparent to the students from the start. The original title was "Conflict Resolution—Competition, Cooperation, and Survival." The problem has been that this title unintentionally confirms a popular notion of conflict which nontraditional students cling to most tenaciously; namely, that conflict is a disease and conflict resolution, a curative purge. Hardly the perspective of the course's original developers, this idea nonetheless can too easily be construed as confirmed by any number of concepts and theories of conflict and studies of methods for dealing with it.

While the new team has not settled upon a final revised title, the one used in this report—"Conflict and Change"—is the tag they currently prefer. Their hope is to emphasize the course's idea of conflict as a catalyst of growth and productivity, without naively implying that it (or its resolution) means freedom from complications or pain. This idea is emerging as central to the first unit of the course, an overview of four principles of conflict as productive catalyst, now being developed, and in another unit on the family tentatively planned to focus on maturation as both a source and a result of conflict. Students' developing a more complicated attitude of ambivalence towards conflict—conceiving of it as a creative as well as a destructive force in human life—is what is hoped for in the new version of the course and will be a central concern in interim and final evaluations of student learning.

Nontraditional Access to Knowledge: Renewed Emphasis on Experience

A central pedagogical question of Conflict and Change has been one that echoes down through the decades of twentieth-century experimentation in general education: What understandings can be gleaned from the academic storehouses of specialized knowledge for fruitful use in lay general educational courses? One starting point that is traditional in the General College is to focus a course of study (and the minds of its developers) on tangible experience. This effort becomes a strenuous exercise in self-consciousness and self-discipline for faculty planners whose own educational and conceptual loyalties are highly specialized and abstract. The struggle is manifested in the work of the current faculty team on discovering an organizational plan for Conflict and Change.

Agreeing to the expressed intention of having the course focus on explorations of conflict in various areas of experience—i.e., sex, family, social life, recreation, schooling, consuming, work—the team immediately plunged into a deductive approach to learning that was informed to the core by their own disciplinary predispositions. Not conflict in experience but principles of conflict became the course agenda: in each unit students would study given principles, and cases from various areas of experience would be used to demonstrate the principles. Depending upon the balance of class time devoted to theory and experiential illustration, such an approach can either run afoul of nontraditional students' low tolerance for protracted abstract conceptualization or belittle experience, their own primary and accessible source of wisdom, as a handmaiden of erudite theory. In addition, it frequently leads teachers to concentrate rather assiduously upon the complexities of their discipline, risking the aim of effectively distributing their knowledge to a lay audience of potential users and thereby betraying

their faith that the specialized knowledge in which they revel has general application and utility.

Confronted with these challenges, one exasperated team member reproachfully exclaimed, "Is this a social-science-based course, or isn't it?" The answer settled upon is that it is not. Nor does the course exist solely to celebrate the natural sciences or the humanities. It is a pragmatic general education course in which knowledge and understandings from whatever sources are summoned to the study of experience and to the purpose of complicating lay perceptions of experience. In this formulation of nontraditional education, disciplinary theories, concepts, principles, and so on become the variously mustered ad hoc handmaidens of learning and thinking more profoundly about experience.

In the second stage of organizational planning where the team is now ruminating, a scheme has emerged which would place study of areas of personal experience in the first quarter, preceded or succeeded by focus on inner conflict, and then would turn to conflicts within and among groups in the second quarter. The team have set to work considering what conflicts to deal with in one area--family—and have channeled their thinking about the contributions of various disciplines to this study by settling upon the theme of maturation. In this process, they are making two discoveries. First, their original conventional dichotomizing between such paired concepts as intrapersonal and interpersonal conflict, using them as foci of separate units, is disintegrating; both will quite naturally be treated in this single experience-oriented unit. The next likely step will be to recognize that other related dichotomies—such as the personal/social, individual/group, inner/external, micro-world/macro-world conflicts which inform their current overall scheme for the course—will also diminish in seeming

conceptual necessity and usefulness. The team may find their way after all to combining various sources of knowledge and kinds of principles and concepts in experience-oriented units.

The success of this move depends greatly upon the fruitfulness of the team's exploration of one unit and their willingness to follow the directions that logically evolve from this sort of inductive approach to course development. For their second discovery is that concrete consideration of what might go into one experience-oriented unit suggests other closely related units: their current discussions of the family unit have already suggested such topics as health care, legal and bureaucratic processes and procedures, aging, and so on—all addressed from the perspective of conflicts in the family. In the end, the team may settle upon as few as four experience-oriented units over the two quarters of study, each unit as richly and complexly evolved as the first unit seems promising to become. Whatever the case, evaluations of the course will surely include consideration of how satisfactorily the faculty team have conceived and implemented the course with a fundamental orientation towards studying experience, what factors have facilitated and obstructed this endeavor, and what aids or hinders their graceful use of induction as a method of course development.

Nontraditional Access to Knowledge: A New Way of Approaching Concrete Conceptualization and Inductive Learning

Like a great number of other teachers concerned with developing appropriate educational alternatives for nontraditional students, the faculty teams teaching Conflict and Change have sought fresh, effective approaches to these students' learning that reap the advantages of the discovery method and counteract the effects of their low tolerance for intense, protracted

abstract conceptualization. The current team is considering the following plan for learning concepts and principles. First, students will be immersed in study and discussion of materials from a variety of sources. Then they will be led to see the underlying or over-riding metaphors which govern the materials and their presentation. In recognizing the salient metaphors, students will apprehend concepts and relationships among concepts. Led further to discern the connections among these metaphors, they will arrive at an understanding of each unit principle implicitly under consideration and will be ready to state it themselves or to receive a statement of it meaningfully.

An example may be in order here. The central part of the planned introductory overview unit will be concerned with basic principles of conflict considered as a catalyst of productivity. To get at the second of these principles, students will be immersed in several of the following topics of study: binary occurrences in creation myths; modes of biological reproduction; the function of the DNA molecule; dependent relations of organisms in the ecological system; Hegelian logic; themes and variations in music and musical counterpoint; industrial/labor mediation; party-system politics; plea bargaining; patterns of popular and classical dance. . . . Next, the instructors will lead students into identifying metaphors governing the information and concepts presented; that is, for example, duality, battle, mingling, balance, dissonance, harmony, continuum, triads, emergence, give-and-take, opposition, matching, mirroring, and so on. From this discussion, instructors will finally lead students to a statement of the implied unit principle: man has conceived of continuing productivity as occurring through the linking and reconciling of conflicting entities.

If successfully implemented, this approach seems to have two advantages. It could serve as an effective integrating device, for the use of metaphor is one "similarity with a difference" that cuts across sources and fields of knowledge. In theoretical/research fields, metaphors govern the development of theory and are embodied in its application. In the arts, metaphors govern the selection and arrangement of sensory particulars and embody the generalization of the work of art.

For nontraditional students, recognizing governing metaphors seems a particularly appropriate means for their getting at concepts and generalizations. Here is the second advantage, an idea conceived again in the General College's experience with such students. They are able to grasp metaphors because of their concreteness. And, with guidance, they can detect metaphors in theoretical and artistic statements. It is the metaphorical approach to learning which reveals—in all the explosive and exciting meaning of that term—the richness and complexity of the principles they have assimilated. When certain that this triumphant and joyful moment will arrive, nontraditional students, like the most academic of learners, will willingly forego the limited security which comes from memorizing an abstraction handed to them at the outset. With this methodology, nontraditional students participate in the unfolding of meanings, nourished by the elation of discovery. A generalization so arrived at belongs to them; they have absorbed the meaning in the process of arriving at it. Then, for the first time, they are able to test out the validity of the generalization against their understanding of their own experience. If the two are compatible—the new insight illuminating and enriching the old understanding—the students will assimilate the generalization into their own wisdom. If not, they do not simply reject the generalization; rather,

they further defer understanding it. This approach through metaphor-recognition to guided delayed discovery has been tried with promising results in General College humanities courses. Its workability and efficacy in an integrated team-taught course will be another concern in the evaluation of Conflict and Change.

Increased Scope of Planned Integration

No faculty team comes to the assignment of Conflict and Change or any of its companion courses with the notion that the experience for teachers or students can be easily managed. But the current team has a "luxury" unavailable to their two predecessors—an additional quarter of time to think, to gather materials, to plan. Making every feasible effort to plan for the accomplishment of integration in the course is a most urgent objective. Many of the techniques that they are considering for promoting integration in the course have already been implied in the various sections of this report:

1) Designating the course units as areas or facets of experience to be studied promotes integrated learning by generously and unabashedly mingling materials of various disciplines and media in a pragmatic search for complicated, enriched understanding of conflict in lived experience.

2) Designating principles within each unit to be arrived at inductively in class operates in a similar fashion to effect integrated study, guiding the selection and mix of materials from various sources of knowledge seeming best suited to illuminate them.

3) The use of metaphor-recognition as a device enabling students to grasp concepts and principles settles upon a commonality among fields

of knowledge and invites recognition of relationships among perspectives and understandings by comparison of the metaphors they employ.

4) The learning technique of guided delayed discovery too contributes to intellectual integration, approximating, in the limited way of brief formal study, the gradual assimilation of knowledge and understanding which can eventuate in the getting of "sudden" comprehensive insights—an integrated intellectual experience to be enjoyed by lay or generalist learners as well as by those highly specialized students whom we call scholars and scientists.

5) Unit reviews by the faculty team are a fifth planned device of integration occurring as each unit proceeds, particularly at its conclusion, and summarizing its basic metaphors and principles and their most important applications.

Whatever the plans for educational integration, their workability and effectiveness rest upon the perseveringly cooperative functioning of the teaching team from start to finish. Team-guided integrated learning for nontraditional students requires a productive, dynamically integrated relationship among the team members.

Agreement upon certain pedagogical and intellectual postures, for instance, seems imperative. Nontraditional students come to college courses with the desire to gain understandings that will illuminate or clarify experience and a habit of understanding new meanings profoundly through connections that they make to experience. At the same time, a class that addresses their experience and invites them to explore their experiences surprises them. They distrust the situation: the address is window-dressing, the invitation insincere. The faculty team must agree upon what postures

they will take in order to create an environment conducive to the students' trusting them and each other: citing their own experiences as illustrations, attending to students' descriptions of their experiences and inviting students to help them assess these reports, not insisting upon the primacy of academic stances when they are getting in the way of students' understanding, and so forth.

Nontraditional students also seek certain, unambiguous understanding and are inclined to think that college instruction should supply it; at the same time, they preserve the suspicion of an "outsider" that an academician's knowledge is not truthful—that is, it is unuseful or irrelevant to "real" life, is an exercise in obfuscation, and so on—a proposition "proved" to them in academicians' unwillingness to "talk straight." The faculty team must agree upon what postures they will take in order to create an environment conducive to students' playing with the stance of intellectual uncertainty, growing at ease with complexity and ambiguity. They do this by asserting the usefulness of the information and perspectives which they present and yet exercising intellectual humility; by being themselves critical of materials and methods of study and friendly towards criticism without demonstrating the purist's despair over the imperfection of an idea or method of inquiry; by good-humoredly teasing each other before the class about the weaknesses of each other's field of knowledge, concepts, and methods of inquiry and being frank when the teasing is based upon a gross misrepresentation of the field; by exploring in view of the class why they tend toward a certain position without needing to claim it as the Truth, and so on. In these ways, they draw the students into being "insiders" who are endlessly curious and as much intrigued by the unworkability or the limits of a concept as by its applicability or efficacy. In the study of

conflict, students can be invited to join the search for understanding where there are few, if any, agreed-upon, unambiguous answers.

The coordinated implementation of the course goes beyond agreement among the team members on classroom postures. Their planning the governing ideas of the course and various facets of its operations begins well before the class commences and continues throughout their performance as conductors of the course. In the preplanning stages now, the current team is working towards agreement upon the meaning of the course objectives; the boundaries and structure of the course; the focus of each unit; the principles governing each unit; the methods for integrating the units principle by principle and the course unit by unit; the materials to be studied and the methods of studying them; instructional techniques; the types and purposes of study aids, quizzes, examinations, student projects, and so on. They view the ordering of textbooks, films, prepared videotaped programs, etc., and are arranging with KTCA-TV for the airing of specified programs during the week, with the University of Minnesota's Closed Circuit Television system for the airing of other programs during class time, and with the University's Audio-Visual Department and the General College's Media Center for the audio/video taping of presentations made in class or made for viewing in class as joint responsibilities. They are looking together for aspects of the course which they are most interested in evaluating.

This team expects to continue working closely during the two quarters that the class is in session, meeting weekly to assess the operation of the course during the week; anticipating and refining the next week's course of study; and preparing study aids, quizzes, or other materials needed to conduct the next week's business. (Agreeing upon the particular purpose of each study aid, quiz, or test, they plan to write them separately and submit

them to each other's review, write them together, or write each other's section of primary interest so as to bring an educated layperson's perspective to the task of facilitating and assessing students' learning of specialized materials used to explore the course units' principles.) They will refine their plans for joint presentations to the class and prepare discussion sessions or summaries of guest lectures, media presentations and notes on students' reactions, questions, comments, etc. They will meet with students individually or in groups to discuss matters related to the course. They will supervise the teaching assistant's activities (grading of papers, aiding students who are preparing class presentations and projects, conferring with students in a manner appropriate for nontraditional students). They will grade the students' projects jointly. With the aid of consultants, they will devise, administer, and assess the results of instruments for evaluating the course. Among the central purposes will be identifying the nature and assessing the effectiveness of the faculty team's relationship and functioning.

Reordered Objectives

In this report, the first appears among the last, a consideration of the planned objectives of Conflict and Change. At this early stage of redevelopment, no departure from convention is anticipated in the formulation of student performance objectives, as the preliminary broad statement of them below will illustrate, except in their ordering.

1) Students will gain confidence and power from acquiring the understandings and skills of the course.

2) With this growing self-esteem, they will develop an appreciation of the understandings and skills of the course and enjoyment of the process of acquiring them.

3) They will gain understanding of concepts pertaining to conflict and change from various disciplines.

4) They will gain skill in drawing out such concepts from the modes of expression and operation in these various disciplines and in other sources of knowledge and understanding.

5) They will additionally gain skills in applying these concepts to particulars in areas of experience covered in the course.

The departure from convention in ordering these objectives stems from an understanding of nontraditional students which has become axiomatic in the General College's work with a rather wide variety of them. Whereas students' self-esteem and pleasure in learning are generally viewed as delayed by-products and, by many standards, immeasurable or otherwise dubious educational objectives, they are properly essential in the education of nontraditional students. Such students need success in an academic setting, need to relish success, in order to learn there. Their pleasure in success is concomitant with their acquiring understandings and skills. Isn't that the pleasure to be gotten from learning anywhere? In the education of nontraditional students, it is central, not an afterglow or somewhat embarrassing extra dimension to creditable learning, and its achievement ranks among the primary aims of this course's offering and consideration of the interim and final assessments of its effectiveness.

Tentative Plans for Evaluation

The new faculty team planning the revision of Conflict and Change have not begun to consider in any detail the kinds of evaluative instruments they might employ or the evaluative designs they might commit themselves to. But they have considered some aspects of the operation of the course that

they will want evaluated, some areas of student and staff performance and achievement which they will want measured, and some of the individuals and groups whom they would select to participate in the assessment process. At the moment, they are considering the following working outline:

I. Evaluation of Student Learning

A. Vis-à-vis objectives 1) and 2) above: students' developing self-esteem and pleasure in the learning of the course:

The faculty team and teaching assistant will keep a record of conversations with students and a notebook on students' reactions/performance in class. Reviewing each other's records and notes, they will write a joint statement on the students' progress towards gaining confidence and power from acquiring the understandings and skills of the course and developing appreciation of these understandings and skills and enjoyment in the process of acquiring. The report will speculate on the multiple factors promoting and frustrating the students' attainment of these objectives. The students' sense of degree to which their learning has been integrated, their comfort/discomfort with the learning technique of guided delayed discovery, their trust/distrust of the instructional staff, and their ease/unease with the stance of intellectual uncertainty will be primary concerns in this part of the course evaluation.

B. Vis-à-vis objectives 3), 4), and 5) above: students' acquiring understandings and skills:

To measure students' acquisition of understandings and skills in applying those understandings, the faculty team—with the aid of evaluation consultants from inside and outside the General College and the University of Minnesota's Measurement Services

Center—will devise, administer, and evaluate the results of a pre- and post-test designed to reveal their understandings and skills of application through their registered reactions to two scenes of conflict presented live or on film or videotape. In response to the first scene, they will answer a series of multiple-choice questions, choosing one of five statements supplied to them for each question which they think best characterizes the situation and facets thereof. (For each question, the five choices will reflect concepts and principles of the course, as well as ideas antagonistic to them.) Before viewing the second scene, students will be given a checklist of concepts and principles of the course and asked to check the statements which they believe they already fully understand. (In the post-test, they will be asked to mark separately those statements which they believe they fully understood before taking the class and those they believe they grasped fully as a result of taking the class.) Then, after viewing the second conflict scene, the students will select from the checklist those statements which they think can be applied to the situation depicted in the scene.

II. Evaluation of Pedagogy and Course Operation

A. Student Evaluation.

1. Evaluation of Teaching Team's Performance—Individual Assessments

The team's fruitful functioning is a vital concern in the course and may aptly be judged via consideration of their handling of conflict among themselves. The way the team handles conflict is a point of fascinating and quite perceptive interest

among nontraditional students. An instrument which at once measures the team's performance and the students' understandings of conflict and their skills in applying them will be devised, administered, and evaluated by the faculty team with the aid of consultants named in point I.B, above. In this exercise, students will be given a list of statements derived from the course's concepts and principles of conflict and change which apply to faculty team behavior. They will check those statements which they believe appropriately characterize the particular team in question and supply one narrative illustration or some other piece of specific evidence of the team's behavior to demonstrate the validity of each statement that they have checked.

2. Group Evaluation of the Operation of the Course

The class will be divided into four task groups of about ten each. Each group will be led by a General College counselor, communication instructor, or other qualified person who has expertise in leading group discussion. Each group will have two tasks: 1) to discuss a topic shared by all the groups (i.e., what they think they learned in the course and what ingredients in the course they think contributed most to that learning or what class session they thought were the most effective) and 2) to assess an aspect of the course assigned only to this group for consideration (assigned readings, media-viewing assignments, guest lectures, quizzes and examinations, projects, class discussions, role-playing or simulation games, field trips, study groups, and so on, from among the course's

assorted materials and class activities). These group sessions will be videotaped and viewed by the team of teachers who will select points from the discussions and set them down on paper for the whole class to respond to. Students will be asked to check 1) points made in the group discussions with which they especially agree and 2) points with which they especially disagree. In addition, they will be asked to list recommendations for aspects of the course that they think should be continued and recommendations for improvements that they think should/could be made.

B. Professional Peer Evaluation

1. A team of evaluators from the University community, including most especially recipients of the Horace T. Morse-Amoco Foundation Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education, will be invited to assess the course. They will review course objectives and materials, interview students and the teaching team, observe not fewer than nine class sessions, and write a report stipulating their assessments of the course's operation and their recommendations for its improvement.

2. Colleagues in undergraduate education across the country will be invited to assess impressionistically the course at the meeting of the Association for General and Liberal Studies to be hosted in Minneapolis by the General College in the fall of 1982. In a preparatory session, the teaching team will present to the convention a description of the course and statements of its purposes, objectives, what they hope is happening in the course, what the instruments of integrated teaching and learning

are, and so forth. Then, a session of the class will be conducted at the convention site, concluding with a question-and-answer session between the audience of conventioneers and the students and team teachers. Finally, a questionnaire devised by the teaching team with the aid of consultants will be distributed to the observers: the questions will focus on their qualified assessment of whether various aims and objectives of the course are being addressed and met in the operation of the course.

The theoretical groundwork for this planned experimental revision of Conflict and Change was based upon this writer's experience with nontraditional students during 14 years of teaching and curriculum development in the General College and one period of service as a member of this course's teaching team. Her view colors the way in which she talks about nontraditional students, how they learn, participate, and respond; and it permeates her discussion about the anticipated redesigned delivery format, refocused subject of study, renewed emphasis on experience, new way of approaching concrete conceptualization and inductive learning, increased scope of planning integration, reordered objectives, and tentative plans for evaluation.

The current designated coordinator of the course, she had the responsibility of proposing educational principles and a conceptual format which might give the revised version of the course direction and cohesion. The other members of the team, the natural scientist and the social scientist, now have the opportunity and the responsibility to test the viability and soundness of these principles as they develop, together with this writer, a detailed course plan and to propose and argue for other educational principles as team planning discussions proceed at least twice weekly over the next six months.

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